

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 MCT-01 SY-05 CAB-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00

PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 IO-13 AF-08 EA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

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TAGS: EAIR, NS

SUBJ: INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT SECURITY

REF : STATE 212490

SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH GOS IS AWARE OF RESPONSIBILITY TO INSURE SECURITY AT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, EMBASY'S EXPERIENCE LEADS US TO BELIEVE THAT DETERMINED TERRORISTS COULD MOUNT A SURPRISE ATTACK WITH FEW OBSTACLES PLACED IN THEIR WAY. IF FAA ADVICE OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BECOMES AVAILABLE, BELIEVE SURINAM COULD BENEFIT AND WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO OFFER.

1. EMBOFF CALLED ON SURINAM'S ATTORNEY GENERAL M. G. DE MIRANDA SEPTEMBER 7 TO EXPRESS USG CONCERN REGARDING INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT SECURITY. ALTHOUGH MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS HAS OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ZANDERIJ AIRPORT, SURINAM'S ONLY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND POLICE (OF WHICH ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE IS PART) IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SECURITY MEASURES. DE MIRANDA SAID THAT AIRPORT SECURITY HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCERNS OF THE GOS OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS.

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HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH SURINAM HAS NOT FORMALLY ACCEDED

TO INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION CONVENTIONS RATIFIED BY THE NETHERLANDS (TOKYO, THE HAGUE, MONTREAL), GOS CONSIDERS THEM BINDING AND IS CARRYING OUT ITS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THEM. HE ANTICIPATED THAT GOS MIGHT EXPRESS FORMAL ADHERENCE TO THESE AGREEMENTS SOMETIME DURING THE COMING YEAR.

2. DE MIRANDA SAID THAT POLICE SCREEN ALL PASSENGERS ENTERING DEPARTURE LOUNGE, WHICH ALSO SERVES AS TRANSIT LOUNGE FOR THOSE FEW PASSENGERS WHO TRANSIT PARAMARIBO ON AIR FRANCE FLIGHTS CONNECTING CAYENNE WITH GEORGETOWN. AIRPORT ITSELF IS GUARDED AT ALL TIMES BY POLICE AND ARMY, BOTH OF WHOM HAVE DETACHMENTS AT ZANDERIJ.

3. ALTHOUGH EMBOFF NOTED THAT NO COMMITMENTS COULD BE MADE, HE OBSERVED THAT FAA SECURITY ADVICE AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COULD SOMETIMES BE MADE AVAILABLE TO INTERESTED GOVERNMENTS. DE MIRANDA SAID HE THOUGHT GOS WOULD WELCOME THE CHANCE TO BENEFIT FROM SUCH ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE.

4. COMMENT: EXPERIENCE OF EMBASSY PERSONNEL HAS BEEN THAT IN SPITE OF ASSURANCES OFFERED BY DE MIRANDA, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR A DETERMINED INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP OF TERRORISTS TO EVADE POLICE CHECKS AND ENTER TRANSIT AREA AS WELL AS AIR FIELD ITSELF. IT IS TRUE THAT AT LEAST IN THEORY ONLY SCREENED DEPARTING PASSENGERS AND PREVIOUSLY CLEARED TRANSIT PASSENGERS CAN ENTER THE DEPARTURE/TRANSIT LOUNGE (SPECIALLY CLEARED OFFICIALS CAN ALSO ENTER); ALL LUGGAGE AND PARCELS (INCLUDING THOSE SENT THROUGH THE MAILS) ARE PHYSICALLY INSPECTED BEFORE LOADING ON THE PLANE; AND NON-TICKET HOLDERS ARE NOT EVEN ADMITTED TO AIRPORT TICKET COUNTERS. NEVERTHELESS, WE HAVE NOTICED THAT ENFORCEMENT OF THESE RESTRICTIONS IS FREQUENTLY LAX. IN ADDITION, WE SUSPECT IT WOULD BE EASY FOR A TERRORIST TO ENTER THE RESTRICTED AREAS BETWEEN FLIGHTS AND SIMPLY AWAIT IN HIDING AN OPPORTUNE MOMENT TO STAGE AN ATTACK.

5. ALTHOUGH NO US CARRIERS SERVICE PARAMARIBO AND FEW U.S. CITIZENS USE THE FACILITIES OF ZANDERIJ AIRPORT, THE USAF OCCASIONALLY STOPS AT ZANDERIJ FOR REFUELING OR OVER-

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NIGHTING. FOR THIS REASON IN PARTICULAR, IF FAA SCHEDULES A TRAINING COURSE IN THE U.S., WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO OFFER THE GOS ONE SLOT. A SHORT-TERM IN-COUNTRY SPECIALIST MIGHT ALSO BE WELL RECEIVED AND WE WOULD SUGGEST THIS BE CONSIDERED AS AN ALTERNATIVE. GOS SHOULD HAVE SUFFICIENT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR SUCH TRAINING ASSUMING IT IS WILLING TO BACK UP THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S ORAL EXPRESSION OF INTEREST WITH CASH.

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